AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

A3

1.   (Currently amended): A method for <u>managing data</u> ~~self-defining data elements~~ comprising:

    <u>providing a data element that includes metadata within said data element;</u>

    ~~associating a data element with metadata;~~

    storing <u>data</u> management information in the metadata<u>, said data management information for managing said data element</u>;

    <u>storing, within said data element,</u> ~~providing~~ one or more anchor points to begin selected analysis processes; and

    storing <u>data</u> management rules and processing rules in the metadata.

2.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a time stamp.

3.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a management rule.

4.   (Original): The method of claim 3, wherein the management rule comprises one of performance criteria, reliability criteria, availability criteria, and capacity criteria.

5.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a pointer to a management rule.

6.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a sequencing rule.

7.   (Original): The method of claim 6, wherein the sequencing rule comprises one of a logical rule, a time rule, and a structure rule.

8.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a pointer to a sequencing rule.

A3

9.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein the management information comprises a management function for accomplishing management rules.

10.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein associating is accomplished by physically storing the metadata with the data.

11.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein associating is accomplished by storing a pointer with the data that allows one to locate the metadata.

12.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein anchor points are pointers to the current location the metadata for selected data elements.

13.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein anchor points are copies of the metadata for selected data elements.

14.   (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein processing rules define the order of selecting data elements for processing.

15.   (Original): The method of 1, wherein processing rules define controls for processing management information for each data element.

16.   (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein the processing controls include sequential processing in priority order.

17.   (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein the processing controls include indexed processing following specific tree structures first.

A3

18. (Original): The method of claim 15, wherein the processing controls include parallel processing.

19. (Original): The method of claim 18, wherein parallel processing includes a separate instance of processing for each data element found processed simultaneously.

20. (Original): The method of claim 18, wherein parallel processing includes a separate instance of processing for each data element found processed concurrently.

21. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein management information comprises a pointer to the location where rules are stored.

22. (Original): A self-defining data element for enhanced data management and recovery, comprising:
    a data portion; and
    a metadata portion,
    wherein the metadata includes management information including management rules and processing rules and one or more anchor points to begin selected analysis processes.

23. (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 22, wherein the management information comprises a time stamp.

24. (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 22, wherein the management information comprises a management rule.

25. (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 24, wherein the management rule comprises one of performance criteria, reliability criteria, availability criteria, and capacity criteria.

A3

26.   (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 22, wherein the management information comprises a pointer to a management rule.

27.   (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 22, wherein the management information comprises a sequencing rule.

28.   (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 27, wherein the sequencing rule comprises one of a logical rule, a time rule, and a structure rule.

29.   (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 22, wherein the management information comprises a pointer to a sequencing rule.

30.   (Original): The self-defining data element of claim 22, wherein the management information comprises a management function for accomplishing management rules.